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The Raid

Tripoli radio reports Qadhafi is alive, but he has not been seen since the attack. Two of his sons were reportedly injured.

Confirmed damage reports from Libya are not yet available. The Libyan media is now reporting 67-70 civilians dead with "scores" wounded.

The French have issued a statement that "considerable damage" was sustained by their embassy during the bombing. They report it as collateral damage from a bomb explosion in an adjacent Libyan building (which may have been the External Intelligence Headquarters). The embassy was empty at the time.

Foreign Reaction

Libyan radio has called for a "one million martyr revolution" to fulfill its Arab liberation role, and has particularly solicited support from the armies of Syria as well as Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia.

There has been no official reaction by either the Egyptians or the Saudis. Media accounts in both countries have been low key and limited to factual reporting.

Tass called the action "naked aggression" but said it was too early to speak of the consequences of "this new act of state terrorism" by the United States. Tass said nothing about Soviet support.

In the UK, Howe came out with a strong public statement in support of our action, but opposition leaders were highly critical of our use of UK bases. No press reports as yet.

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In France, no official reaction; initial press reactions mildly negative. In Spain, also no official reaction; the leading daily was scathingly critical in its editorial. In the FRG, no official reaction, but Embassy reports Bonn is upset by the lack of prior specific information on military operations. Unofficial comment by Bangemann and Genscher were critical. Opposition parties highly negative. No press reaction. In Italy, no official reaction yet; Craxi is expected to say something by noon.

United Nations

Early this morning, we delivered our report to the UN as required under Article 51. A copy is attached. The report notes Libyan policy of use of force is in clear violation of Article 2(4) of the Charter, and repeats the President's language that our "self-defense is not only our right; it is our duty . . . consistent with Article 51".

Congressional Reaction

Dole said that VADM Poindexter had informed the Congressional leadership of plans for the attack 2-3 hours in advance of the strike and that, as Poindexter had noted, "there would still be time to call off the strike if there was a substantial amount of opposition." "There wasn't any opposition, although there was a feeling that they should have been consulted earlier," Dole said; "the President has taken the right action," the air strike was "an act of self-defense."

Lugar said "It was the logical next step. The United States has responded in an appropriate and a proportional manner to the terrorist attack on our citizens and soldiers in Berlin. In previous situations, we tried diplomatic, political and economic sanctions to no avail. The air strike sends the strong message to Libya that the United States will not tolerate the indiscriminate violence of terrorism against us."

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Nunn was equally positive, saying he hoped the air attack would deter state-supported terrorism.

Byrd said Congress had not really been consulted, only informed. He understood the need for secrecy, but thought that in keeping with the War Powers Resolution, some congressional leaders should have been informed of Administration plans as they developed. Byrd wondered "If this is the policy - tit for tat, tit for tat - where does this take us? What is next - Syria?"

Michel said he supported the President's decision to attack Libya, but echoed Byrd's concern about where the attack would lead and what retaliation is likely.

Fascell supported the President's action, saying the U.S. cannot sit passively by and allow state-supported terrorism to kill Americans with impunity. We have to retaliate, but the Constitutional question of Congress supporting the President requires serious consideration by the Congress, Fascell said.

Neither O'Neill nor Wright have issued statements. Kennedy said he thought "all Americans would stand with the commander-in-chief at this moment." Indicating bipartisan support, liberal HFAC member Torricelli said "I don't think you're going to find any divisions in either house. We needed an appropriate response, and this is it."

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